

## **Notes from Archer-Bonell Meeting – Tuesday, September 30, 2014 - Horatio Homer Community Room of New Dudley Police Station**

**DND Staff Present:** Chief & Director Sheila Dillon, Project Manager Bernard Mayo, Sr. Project Manager Reay Pannesi, Sr. Development Officer John Feuerbach, REMS Deputy Director Donald Wright.

**Other City & Elected Officials:** Kaira Fox, Roxbury ONS Liaison; Liana Poston, Rep. Liz Malia's office.

Chief Dillon opened the meeting. She stated it was DND's error not to reach out to Highland Park more and that the prior RFP didn't reflect comments received at prior meetings as well as it should have. As a result, she responded to feedback DND subsequently received, and committed to Highland PK. PRC to have this new meeting and draft better development guidelines.

**Bernard Mayo opened up the discussion on community desires for this site (comments received in bullets as follows):**

- Commercial use was widely favored with a desire for existing Dudley businesses to own their own spaces. Preference for "indigenous" Dudley businesses.
- Emphasize businesses that have served the community or have a commitment to serve the community.
- Person asked if that would preclude startups. Looking to grow businesses with financial capacity.
- Ideal candidate may not be able to show money upfront. Encourage building wealth in the community (in spirit of Roxbury Master Plan).
- S. Dillon said DND willing to give more time for RFP submission in order to serve smaller applicants needing more time to get finances, etc. together for a proposal submission.
- Design RFP that is attractive to more developers. Make RFP process more accessible.
- Suggestion to have preference for developer who will favor local businesses with a mix of uses. Roxbury business condos.
- Some alluded to "mixed use with some housing" to enhance the financial viability of a possible project and asked for the possible allowance of some housing. Mixed use with Roxbury-based businesses will create "vibe". Don't limit mixed use – could be commercial/retail or commercial/housing. Suggestions that mixed-use will bring in more developers.
- Want developer to have commitment to the community and make investment in neighborhood.
- DND asked audience to "define mixed use". Response was retail/office/housing & provide ownership opportunities for all types of uses.
- Suggestion for a number of smaller owners vs. one large owner. Suggestion that this should be a requirement because "partnerships don't always work out. Attempts at this with artists' co-ops didn't work."

- Incubator space needed in Dudley.
- Businesses in Dudley that want to own should be able to own.
- Commercial/retail/housing mixed use – want choice. Don't limit opportunities. Didn't feel as though there was a choice in last RFP.
- Mixed use with a commercial benefit for a local non-profit. Liked Discover Roxbury in Urbanica's proposal. Business is a commercial benefit. Or, provide headquarters for a non-profit like Discover Roxbury, but not limited to Discover Roxbury.
- Use should "activate" the street throughout the day into the night. Create pedestrian traffic, etc. Can be scary at night by site because it is deserted – needs activity.
- Criticism of Bartlett project that it doesn't integrate well with neighborhood and creates breaks in the "urban fabric."
- Development should speak to being in context with other developments going on here right now.
- No auto body shops.
- Washington Street needs retail. Want it to be destination retail. Mention of technology, ice cream, bike shop or a children's items as possible goods to be sold.
- Creating a venue where smaller retail can thrive. Multiple smaller ownership opportunities. Something that has a draw. Multiple commercial opportunities affordable to local businesses.
- Mention of possible E+ or E neutral development in line with things being built in Highland Park. At a minimum be a "green" development emphasizing energy efficiency.
- Something that brings in foot traffic.
- In terms of design – modern & cutting edge, others said is historic district & needs to be compatible with that. Design should respond to community context, i.e. it was noted that to the North there is the major Dudley business district, and to the immediate South is the planned Bartlett development. What is developed at this site must balance and respond to these important commercial forces.
- S. Dillon warned against being too prescriptive with design. Perhaps state "good design, creative design".
- Not generic & cookie cutter design.

**Next Steps:** DND will draft development guidelines based on this feedback. Will capture this conversation and get back to everyone. When released, RFP will be available for 60 days.